



ASIAN PACIFIC
DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Advancing the well-being
of Asian American Pacific
Islander communities of
Colorado by providing
culturally appropriate and
integrated behavioral,
medical and related
services.

since

1980

www.apdc.org

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March 10, 2023

Office of U.S. House of Representatives Jason Crow
2170 S Parker Road, Suite #280
Aurora, CO 80231

To the Office of U.S. House of Representatives Jason Crow:

I am writing this letter in support of the Colorado Asian Culture and Education Network (CACEN)'s request for FY2024 Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS). As the Executive Director of Asian Pacific Development Center (APDC), I have worked closely with CACEN for more than 15 years and can speak to their leadership and impact in Colorado's Asian Pacific Islander (API) communities.

Founded in 1980, APDC provides services such as adult education, behavioral health support, language interpretation and translation, youth leadership, health equity, and victim assistance to API residents throughout Colorado. As one of the longest standing API-serving organizations, we have witnessed the evolution and changing landscape for immigrants and refugees in our state. In recent years, the impacts of the pandemic and resulting violence and crimes towards Asians has led to a growing need for APIs to have safe spaces in Colorado.

In 2019, CACEN approached APDC with the idea to develop a community center and marketplace that would create visibility for APIs, while providing culturally and linguistically appropriate health services, business opportunities and economic advancement, and education of Asian cultures and arts. The concept, Social Fabric, would be a hub for API-serving organizations to have shared office and event space and provide support for community members to establish new businesses – a space that currently does not exist for our API communities. Through dedication and perseverance, CACEN secured a \$1 million grant at the end of 2020 to further this initiative. While we are aware that more funding is needed to bring this idea into fruition, CACEN has already made considerable strides with its networking, fundraising, and raising awareness of the importance of this community center.

At only five percent of the state population (Census 2020), Colorado's API communities continue to struggle with being seen. Misperceptions also tell the story that API families are doing well and do not need support or resources, when we know that many APIs struggle with mental health, language and cultural challenges, and large disparities in health, income and education. As such, Colorado's API communities would benefit tremendously from this funding opportunity and development of the community center that would provide a safe space for our community members to feel proud of their ethnic backgrounds and embrace their cultural heritage.

Again, we are in support of this request and urge you to direct CDS funds to CACEN. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,

Harry Budisidharta
Executive Director



March 9, 2023

OFFICE OF U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES JASON CROW
2170 S PARKER ROAD, SUITE #280
AURORA, CO 80231

To the Office of U.S. House of Representatives Jason Crow:

On behalf of the City of Aurora's Office of International & Immigrant Affairs, I would like to provide this letter of support to the Colorado Asian Culture and Education Network (CACEN) for FY2024 Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS).

The Office of International and Immigrant Affairs oversees the strategic citywide plan regarding policy, programs and initiatives toward our local immigrant and refugee populations. As you know, the city of Aurora is a diverse and international city, with 1 in 5 of our residents having been born outside the United States. With such diversity that should be amplified and celebrated, we fully support CACEN's initiative to develop an Asian American community center and marketplace in our colorful and diverse city.

CACEN, founded in 2009, has been supporting Colorado's local Asian communities through programs and services focused on advancing youth leadership and civic engagement, addressing the challenges of COVID-19 and anti-Asian hate, cultural education, support for small businesses, and more. Our office has worked closely with CACEN through events like our City's annual Global Fest and through the Aurora Asian/Pacific Community Partnership. For over 30 years, the Aurora Asian/Pacific Community Partnership has connected Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islanders (AANHPI) in the city of Aurora to resources, and united groups and individuals through cultural education, support, and important discussions.

Through our collaborative efforts, we have seen firsthand how CACEN has taken on a leading role in AANHPI communities and are equipped with the knowledge, experience, and influence to develop a community center for AANHPI cultural events, health services, and educational efforts. CACEN has embraced this leadership role as evidenced by being awarded over \$1 million in funding for the acquisition of a building to utilize for a community center. As the organization moves ahead, more funding is needed for the purchase of a building in addition to architectural designs, renovations and repairs.

We hope you strongly consider allocating funds to CACEN for their forward-thinking efforts to develop a center that would provide AANHPI communities a physical space to thrive and small businesses to flourish in Colorado. Please feel free to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

Minsoo Song

Minsoo Song
International Community Outreach Coordinator
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